

Reported speech



Rewrite the following text in **reported speech**. It has been started for you. Continue on a separate sheet of paper if necessary.

Remember: Reported speech reports what the characters have said, rather than quoting their actual words. **Reported speech** is in the **past tense** and has no quotation marks.

The Queen propped her up against a tree, and said kindly, "You may rest a little, now." Alice looked round her in great surprise. "Why, I do believe we've been under this tree the whole time! Everything's just as it was!"

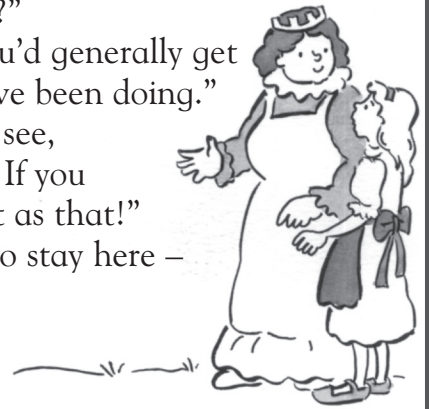
"Of course it is," said the Queen: "what would you have it?"

"Well, in *our* country," said Alice, still panting a little, "you'd generally get to somewhere else – if you ran very fast for a long time, as we've been doing."

"A slow sort of country!" said the Queen. "Now, *here*, you see, it takes all the running *you* can do, to keep in the same place. If you want to get somewhere else, you must run at least twice as fast as that!"

"I'd rather not try, please!" said Alice. "I'm quite content to stay here – only I *am* so hot and thirsty!"

"I know what *you'd* like!" the Queen said good-naturedly, taking a little box out of her pocket. "Have a biscuit?"



From *Through the Looking Glass* by Lewis Carroll

The Queen propped her up against a tree and told her kindly that she

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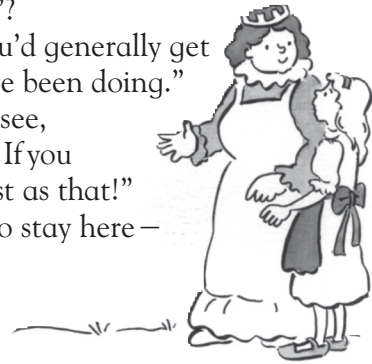
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From *Through the Looking Glass* by Lewis Carroll

The Queen propped her up against a tree and told her kindly that she could rest a little. Alice looked around her and said with surprise, that she believed they had been under that tree all the time and everything had stayed just as it was. The Queen replied that of course it had and asked Alice what else she would want it to be. Alice explained, still panting slightly, that in her country people generally reached somewhere else if they ran fast for a long time as they had. The Queen declared that Alice's must be a slow sort of country. In hers, you had to run as fast as you could just to stay in one place and you needed to run twice as fast to get anywhere else. Alice said that she would rather not try and she was happy to stay where she was except that she was hot and thirsty. The Queen said she knew what Alice would like and asked her if she wanted a biscuit.

Most authors use a mixture of **reported** and **direct speech**. Why do you think they do this? Using reported speech can help the story to flow and save space. Direct speech gives a sense of "being there."

This page provides your child with practice in converting direct speech into reported speech and examines the stylistic reasons for choosing one form or the other. Check that your child's rewriting of the passage is grammatically correct.